



Edition 212 – March 2023

Good News: Humboldt-Uni wants to become climate-neutral

The Berlin Humboldt University wants to become climate-neutral by 2030. The biggest “climate sinners” so far are the buildings. The university has now given itself 14 major lead projects. These include, for example, the establishment of a comprehensive energy management system including climate-friendly university buildings.

Prayer: Thank God for these resolutions and pray for further exemplary climate projects in the city

After the Election: What’s Next?

After the election on February 12th with a big gain for the CDU, exploratory talks are currently underway, both between the CDU and the SPD and with the Greens, as well as between the previous red-green-red coalition partners. All three coalitions would have a majority in the House of Representatives. The parties will decide on coalition talks in one direction or the other. This is expected to happen in the week beginning February 27th. So, it remains exciting. Public opinion is strongly in favour of a new beginning because dissatisfaction with the “old” coalition is high. It is still open whether the CDU will find a partner.

Prayer:

- **Pray for substantial and imminent progress in the exploratory talks**
- **Pray that Berlin gets the government God intended for the best of the city**
- **Pray that the new Senate will really tackle the city's big problems**

Appointments to District Offices

According to the current legal situation, the district mayors and city councillors may remain in office after the repeat election. Reason: They were elected in 2021 by the district assemblies for five years and are temporary civil servants. However, the majorities in the district parliaments changed heavily in the election on February 12th. The realization has now apparently gained acceptance that it is untenable if the new majorities in the district parliaments do not also have consequences for the filling of the offices of mayors and city councillors. The factions in the House of

Representatives have now apparently agreed on a solution. A decision could be made as early as March 16th. According to information from the parliamentary groups, the aim is to ensure by law that the district office members cannot simply continue.

Prayer:

- **Pray that the new district mayors and city councillors will be able to assume office quickly**
- **Pray that this results in the district offices being able to work again**
- **Pray that a just solution can be found that is not a financial burden**

Prayer for the Districts: Reinickendorf

The Evangelical Alliance Berlin and Together for Berlin have been holding a prayer meeting for one district each month since February. In connection with these prayer meetings, an informative article for each district is included in the prayer mail. Here is the information about the district of Reinickendorf. See “Dates” for information about prayer for Reinickendorf on March 13th!

The eleven boroughs of Reinickendorf in the northwest offer ideal conditions for relaxation because of the abundance of green with lots of forest and water. But the district also has its problem neighbourhoods, namely in the south, in the Märkisches Viertel or in the Rollberge. District management and innovative social facilities are attempting to address these problems. This includes the family centre FACE, which is run by the Protestant Church. The arrival centre for refugees is located in the former Karl Bonhoeffer mental hospital. There, the people receive first aid, are registered and, after a few days, are distributed to different parts of the country. Unfortunately, this does not always work, so sometimes the refugees have to stay there much longer. The Urban Tech Republic is being built on the site of the former Tegel Airport. In addition to 5,000 apartments, the plans envisage the establishment of educational and research institutes. In addition, commercial areas for up to a thousand companies are to be created. As early as during construction and redesign, attention is paid to sustainable and forward-looking implementation. In the newly elected district parliament, the CDU has increased its majority and is expected to nominate the future district mayor.

Prayer:

- **Pray for sustainable and adequately financed social work in problem areas**
- **Pray for blessings and protection for the refugee arrival centre**
- **Pray for rapid planning and construction progress for the Urban Tech Republic**

Round Table Against Teacher Shortage

Around 900 teachers are still lacking in Berlin. A Round Table of those responsible tried to meet this challenge. The following measures were named: the work load for teachers should be lessened by having fewer exams; other professional groups should be involved; fewer teachers should work part-time; older teachers should work longer; schools should take on more responsibility and make suggestions. The Round Table was criticized from many sides. There is not much that is new, good ideas have not been implemented and important groups such as the trade union and "Schule muss anders" have not been invited.

Prayer:

- **Pray for openness on the part of political leaders to work together with all stakeholders**
- **Pray for fast implementation of good ideas**
- **Pray that further ideas are heard and implemented**

Month of Fasting Ramadan

This year Ramadan begins on the evening of March 22nd and ends on the evening of April 21st. In many of the more than one hundred mosques in the city, people pray and then break the fast together in the evening after sunset. Many mosques will be full. For many Muslim people, Ramadan is an important part of their faith. During this time, mosques also issue invitations to break the fast together - to politicians, church leaders, but also to the homeless and refugees. You can get the prayer calendar of the Evangelical Alliance here: <https://www.30tagegebet.de/>

Prayer:

- **Pray that Christians allow themselves to be invited and can have conversations about faith**
- **Pray for peaceful celebrations**
- **Pray for the strengthening of respectful coexistence between Muslims and Christians**

Police Station Opened at Kotti

On Feb. 15th, the new police station at Kottbusser Tor in Kreuzberg, called "Kotti", was opened. The new police station is controversial. Supporters such as Interior Senator Iris Spranger (SPD) assume that the

station will counteract drug trafficking, crime and littering around the square. The "Kotti" is considered a place with a high crime rate. The Berlin police register "on average at least one physical injury or robbery, two to three thefts and various drug-related offenses per day" (rbb). Opponents criticize that the station is merely symbolic politics and that the Senate has ignored protests. The "Kotti" is "not only a focus of crime, but above all a hotspot of social imbalances," said a spokesman for the "Kotti for All" alliance. The new police station cannot solve these problems. The "taz" describes the new police station as a "prestige project of the Interior Senator." The conversion of the rooms on the second floor of a high-rise building on "Kotti" cost around 3.24 million euros. From now on, three police officers will monitor events on the square around the clock. A contact area officer, who works around the "Kotti", had already criticized in the "taz" in June 2022 that the problems there were "not of a police nature, but rather social problems that have to be solved by social organizations and not by the police. However, there are too few such organisations."

Prayer:

- **Pray that police officers will always be found at "Kotti" who do their duty with a heart for the local people**
- **Pray that the Senate will invest more in social services that counteract social problems in hotspot areas like here**
- **Pray that police and social organizations work together to prevent and prosecute criminal offenses in places like the "Kotti", thus making lasting change possible**

Keeping On: Housing for Refugees

Around 100 refugees come to Berlin every day, and the accommodations will be exhausted by the end of April. At the refugee summit on February 16, 2023, the municipalities complained that they were reaching their limits. Almost twice as many people applied for asylum in Berlin last year as in the previous year. Just over 14,000 asylum applications were made.

Prayer:

- **Pray for creative solutions for accommodation**
- **Pray for good cooperation between federal, state and local authorities**
- **Pray for the financial meeting with Olaf Scholz at Easter**

Dates

March 8: Prayer for City Politics, 6-7 pm Rotes Rathaus, in front of the main entrance

March 13: Prayer for Reinickendorf, 7:30 pm in the Apostel-Petrus-Gemeinde, Wilhelmsruher Damm 161